魔法戦争
MAGICAL WARFARE
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Mahou Sensou - Volume 01 Chapter 00-02

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Novel Illustrations

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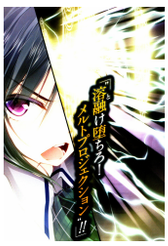
- 
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Prologue

Prologue[edit]

"Nii-san!"

Aiba Mui called out as she descended the stairs leading to a dimly lit subway platform.

Though none of the lights in the area were lit, her surroundings were nonetheless covered in a hazy glow.

This light emanated from several small spheres floating around her like balls of flame.

Radiating a soft yellowish light, the three spheres dipped and bobbed as they followed her every movement.

Responding to her call the young man turned his head to gaze back at her. He like she, was similarly shadowed by three spheres of light.

These however glowed eerily with a pale white light.

He coldly turned to face her, clothed not in the uniform she was accustomed to seeing, but rather in a white shirt and jeans.

His lips never broke their silence.

"Nii-san, I've been looking for you for so long. Please, come home with me!"

As Mui neared the youth, reaching for his arm, a sharp pain flashed across her cheek.

Before she knew what had happened she found herself on the ground.

"...Nii-, Nii-san..."

Although she'd already realized that she'd been struck, she raised her head and continued to plead with him.

The youth's only reaction to the scene before him was a wintry smile.

The contemptuous look in his frigid eyes filled Mui with fear.

"...Nii-san?"

Mui, however looked up tentatively with hope.

Unfortunately, the sneer filling her brother's face, an expression she'd never before seen him wear, quickly replaced any such feelings with despair.

His mocking smile suddenly twisted into an angry snarl.

His first words.

"What're you crying for?"

She hadn't noticed the tears.

"Please remember, Nii-san! Remember Mom, and Dad, and me! I refuse to believe you've just forgotten everything!"

Teardrops traced the angry red lines her brother had left on her cheek.

Seeing Mui in this state the youth's irritation turned impetuous.

With hate-filled eyes he drew his saber from its leather scabbard at his waist, and pressed its point between her eyes.

"Are you going to kill me?" Mui asked her eyes still moist with tears.

"I won't kill you. Your abilities, after all, are needed by we <Trailers>. Don't misunderstand, though; I could kill you without the slightest hesitation. And you call someone like that your brother?"

Mui nodded.

"Yes, I'll never give up. I'll do whatever it takes to return you to normal."

At any moment the saber's tip might pierce on through.

However she'd sooner die here to his blade than abandon him.

"Nii-san, I beg you! Come back with me!"

Mui's desperate cries were covered up by an earsplitting thunder, the sound coming from the depths of the tunnel behind the young man.

It couldn't possibly have been a train however.

The station the two found themselves in was abandoned like some desolate

subterranean temple, and power had long since been cut.

There simply wasn't any way a train would have made its way here.

Though Mui continued to watch her brother, he had since turned to face the tunnel behind him.

As the sound neared them, it became apparent that it was the roar of engines they heard. He sheathed his blade.

Mui rose to her feet.

The young man suddenly thrust his hand out, seeking her arm, but Mui had already stepped back.

-- It's been so long and so hard finding Nii-san...

She couldn't afford to lose him again.

A motorcycle emerged from the tunnel's lip.

Mui knew her brother was about to be taken once more, but her body refused to move.

Because she understood that her brother aimed to deliver her to them.

If that happened, it'd be all over.

If both of them fell into the hands of the enemy, then any hope of saving her brother would vanish.

That was something she couldn't allow to happen.

-- If there's just one of them...

Seated atop the motorcycle was a lone rider.

As Mui calculated her chances, yet another motorcycle silently appeared from the other side. She'd been caught in an ambush.

Once more she called out for her brother.

"Nii-san!"

She wished her brother would follow her.

She wanted with all her heart to reach out her arm, take her brother's hand,

and escape this place.

The sinister smile on his face, making bare his malicious intent, dashed any such hopes to bits.

The two other riders, one in front, and one behind, approached, stepping onto the platform.

Mui's gaze never left her brother.

"Please, please come with me!"

The identities of the two men striding toward her were obscured by the helmets they wore.

Mui's heart was wracked with sorrow at having to part from her brother once more. Nonetheless, she turned and began to race toward the stairs.

A gale struck her from behind.

"Aaah!"

She fell, the sound of footsteps increasing in urgency as she struggled to rise.

She knew what they had done.

Though her palms and knees screamed with pain, she forced herself to her feet and into a run.

Racing up the stairs two at a time, she bit her lip in frustration.

Struggling to hold back her tears, they heedlessly filled her eyes.

She passed through the empty ticket collection counters, and into the seemingly endless dark of the walkway.

Charging up the stairs back to ground level without slowing, she caught sight of the sky, covered in a dusky light.

Though dimly lit, the light was nonetheless piercing to her dark-adjusted eyes, and she squinted in reaction.

Drawing her weapon from its holster, she turned around and pulled the trigger.

A yellow light flashed down the stairwell. Without taking the time to confirm

the result, she continued to rush up the stairs before her.

Leaving the voices of the shouting men behind her, Mui wiped her tears and raced across the empty street.

Chapter 1 - Magic Girl in Summer

CHAPTER 1: Magic Girl In The Summer[edit]

Part 1[edit]

One step from the entrance Nanase Takeshi slightly breathed in what remained of the cool night air.

It was a clear sky with no clouds.

It was just after 6:30am.

For an average high school student, it might have been a bit too early to depart for school, but Takeshi, as usual, closed the front gate quietly, and started walking.

The fine white gate of the mansion on the right, opened automatically when he came before it.

“Good morning Takeshi.”

A girl wearing the same school uniform as Takeshi came out from the opened gate and smiled sweetly.

“Good morning Isoshima.”

Takeshi and the girl, Isoshima Kurumi started walking alongside each other.

This was a usual sight.

Takeshi's house was your typical single family detached house, while on the other hand, the house of Kurumi who lived next door, was a mansion called Isoshima Residence, which was famous even in the neighborhood.

That mansion which was surrounded by a wide garden in all four directions, had 5 times more land than Takeshi's house. Seeing the white porcelain gate open automatically every morning, Takeshi could only smile wryly as he remembered the waist high fence at his own house.

From Kurumi’s appearance, you could tell she was an ojou-sama,[1] but to

Takeshi she was a childhood friend he had known since they were small.

Today, she had a little bit of her long, straight, chestnut-colored hair tied back. Takeshi who was walking next to her could not help but notice her features, slender shoulders, raised eyebrows with eyes that gave a look of determination, her tightly closed mouth with pink colored lips and elegant chin line. Except for the light pink chap stick she had no other makeup on, despite this, she still had an attractive figure.

If 10 youths of the same age were asked, all of them would agree she was cute, if pressed any further they would all say that she was a rare beauty in a class by herself.

Kurumi, aware that she was being watched, lifted her head to look at Takeshi.

“What’s the matter?”

Takeshi shook his head slightly as he smiled.

“It’s nothing, I was just thinking of how quickly the first semester ended.”

While she looked up at the summer sky, Kurumi’s face broke out into a smile.

“Well, before you even know it, the spring exams will be here.”

“Hmmm, that’s true, though I had a difficult time with the aunts because you didn’t want to attend that private girls school in the city, they were surprised and tried to persuade me to convince you.”

Takeshi shrugged his shoulders at Kurumi pouting.

“I’ll choose to go to whatever school I want to and won’t allow anyone to say otherwise, it really can’t be helped, besides, at this point in time I think it’s fine and my parents also think so.”

Takeshi listened to her repeated assertions. “Is that so?” he asked.

“Yeah, if I were to go to a private school I would have to take a train by myself, wouldn’t that be dangerous?”

Takeshi frowned as he tried to imagine Kurumi alone on a train.

“That is certainly possible if you don’t live close to the city.”

“Right!”

Seeing Kurumi’s happy smile glitter and shine like the morning sun, Takeshi could not help but feel somewhat happy too.

It’s the best feeling to be able to laugh with friends even if it is only one other, however, the moment Takeshi arrived at school his facial expression darkened. There was one semester where Kurumi had no friends, they were in separate classes, but not once had Takeshi seen her together with the other girls in her class. Because Takeshi was in the Kendo Club as a first year he was able to

become acquaintances with the third years and befriended several people who were in the same class, even in middle school he had numerous acquaintances. Truthfully, Kurumi was also part of the Kendo club, since she was the only girl she became the club manager and was not actually in an environment where she could make a girlfriend.

Kurumi was a friend, did he need to speak about this no matter what? As expected, he began to feel uneasy, that wasn't good and he felt he should just stop.

In Kurumi's world the only worries she had were to be in the same class as Takeshi, eating lunch with him every day, and to be able to rely on him without causing problems, but while that may be true, she should still make friends, even so, there was no reason for her to say that.

It would be expected that a boy would need considerable courage to interfere with a girl bonding, but maybe that was Kurumi's inner desire. Maybe it would have been better if someone had always been angry. Even so, while walking next to her, Takeshi would send periodic glances her way, it was hard to believe how many times these feelings would be put away. In some respects, Isoshima was a nice and diligent girl.

There was no way for Takeshi to know of her feelings as Kurumi walked like a puppy, waving her hand with a beaming smile.

☆☆☆

Part 2[edit]

Most of the other students were in the classroom by the time Takeshi finished his morning training with the Kendo Club.

You could tell which students anticipated the start of summer vacation tomorrow by looking at their bright faces, this somehow made the atmosphere in the classroom quite lively.

“Nanase?”

Takeshi became confused when someone turned around and suddenly called out to him after a few minutes.

“Eh, what?”

“Don’t ‘eh, what’ me, were you even listening?”

Takeshi's desk was surrounded by two other people standing next to it, the guy who greeted him and started a conversation from the seat in front was a fellow classmate and friend. There were three pairs of eyes staring at Takeshi.

“So, is Nanase going anywhere during break?”

“Ahhh…” Takeshi said as a subtle smile floated across his face.

“Now, now Nanase, Ida.”

When the the three other classmates started an uproar, Takeshi and Ida quickly denied it and pretended they didn't see them.

“Just meet their eyes.”

All three came to an immediate understanding.

“Nanase and Ida also seem to have reached an agreement.”

“Certainly.”

“A person who is too serious and a delinquent.”

Of course, the person who was too serious was Takeshi and the delinquent was Ida, hearing them described as such, Takeshi had mixed feelings and could only put on a wry smile.

“It’s not like anything was meant by being too serious.”

However, Takeshi's words immediately denied that.

“No no! Who is the number one most serious guy!?”

All three instantly pointed at him.

“Hey!”

“Well, it’s just a natural result.”

"Haa," Takeshi let out an exaggerated sigh, “Well, at least it’s better than being a delinquent.”

That remark was immediately rejected.

“It’s no good after all.”

“Nanase is trying to imagine a delinquent.”

“It looks like Nanase leads a proper life.”

Un-un,[2] three people nodded their head in agreement.

“What, a proper life?”

With a shocked expression, Takeshi raised his eyes in bewilderment as if to question his friend.

“Huh? So…let me see….”

Another friend urged him to continue.

“Therefore, if you continued to practice Kendo, you could become a police officer and then find a beautiful person to be your wife.”

“I’m sure there are other ways.”

“Ah, I see.”

“Well, I wonder where there will be a beautiful wife.”

“Wouldn’t that be a life of smooth sailing!”[3]

Three people were trying to imagine who would be their wife, Takeshi too, even though he understood it he did not have the willpower to deny it. Besides it’s not like he could, regardless of how many times he repeated it to himself.

“I’ve said everything I want to say.”

As one blind man said “Maybe I will take one serious step in this wonderful life.”[4] The three of them only nodded to each other.

“No no! I am at the limits of envy.”

“It’s seriously enviable.”

“Oh, but didn't you say you were going to Law School?”

So they finally moved to the point.

“In my defense, recently it hasn't been profitable. I may have to keep an eye on it.”

Takeshi was finally able to take a breath of relief as they switched to a different topic. Even so, this phrase “life of smooth sailing” was ironic for him.

After he failed in that unpleasant situation, what's left in life may only be atonement. Takeshi's future was too far away, what he could see in front and behind him was an abyss that spread out in all directions, it was too realistic and familiar that he became depressed.

☆☆☆

Part 3[edit]

Takeshi had Kendo practice after the closing ceremony, by the time he started to head home it was already late evening.

After he escorted Kurumi (who was the club manager) home, Takeshi opened the door to his house with a depressed look.

“I’m home.”

In a typical family it is normal to call out when you arrived home, and Takeshi wasn't any different. A bright light was on in the hallway. Next to his mother's shoes was a pair of sneakers that were about his size, further back, in the living room, a shadow vaguely moved and could be seen faintly behind the frosted glass door. At the exact moment that Takeshi quietly took off his shoes, he was startled by the laughter coming from the living room.

He hurried up to his room on the second floor, at the same time he entered his room he heard the voices of his mother and younger brother talking downstairs.

It was about the time for dinner to be finished, after Takeshi helped out in the kitchen he changed his clothes. He was sweaty and wanted to take a bath but it was his brother’s time slot.

As usual, he didn’t want to eat dinner and his mother had probably washed the dishes so it couldn’t be helped that there was no way to kill time.

Takeshi had to be careful every day because he wanted to not face his family as much as possible. It had continued be like that because of a certain incident that happened two years ago. From that day on, for him to stay in this house, he

always needed to carry that burden.

Takeshi was a rank holder in Kendo.[5]

It was due to his special skill. If that was sufficient, then he might have had more freedom.

It is up to the family members to deal with their own ghosts.

He began Kendo as an elementary school student, his younger brother and he would go to the Dojo together. Gekkou, who was the younger brother, and Takeshi were born one year apart and were very close to each other.

However, there was an incident that marked a turning point which caused Gekkou to avoid Takeshi, his mother and father also dealt with it in the same way. From that date everything changed, every time his mother saw him she was indifferent, his father would return every day, and his younger brother completely hated him now.

Takeshi could not even remember the last time he laughed in this house.

Just to get along with his family, he had to breathe quietly so he didn't meet anyone.

Because it was all his fault he couldn't blame someone else.

After he changed clothes, Takeshi strained his ears for any movement downstairs. If Gekkou was still in the bath there should a loud sound of water.

He went to the kitchen to eat dinner and then immediately returned to his room.

By the time his brother started to watch TV in the living room he had taken a bath and had already gone back to his room to spend the rest of the time until morning.

Once he got used to this way of living it wasn't that bad.

If he was unable to talk to his family then he can just go to school where there are many more people. How many times has he had this thought? Thinking this, Takeshi leaked out another deep sigh.

“I really wish tomorrow would come quickly.”

He looked out the window towards the Isoshima Residence, planted in the garden there was an unknown broadleaf tree whose leaves swayed in the breeze, a large shadow jumped from the leaves and branches. “What an eerie looking shadow,” murmured Takeshi.

“It would be nice if time would go by faster.”

The tree branches moved slightly as if it nodding in agreement.

“If I could leave this house, anywhere would be better, even hell itself.”

At school, Takeshi is very diligent and sociable, because of this he had many people he considered friends, but at home, he is nothing but a shadow of his former self.

Right now, Takeshi's greatest hope is when dawn breaks.

Summer vacation only increased the unpleasantness of time in his house.

As a result, Takeshi’s summer vacation was always depressing.

☆☆☆

Part 4[edit]

It was the second day of summer vacation, and even though there were no lessons, the school was filled with a lively atmosphere from the energetic students who had come here for club activities.

“Takeshi, you’re going to the dojo, right?”

When they arrived at school Kurumi parted with Takeshi to go to the girl’s locker room while he went towards the clubroom.

It was nearly 9:00am, you could hear the encouraged shouts from around the sports clubs which had already started their practices, from inside the school musical notes played by the woodwind club echoed.

Takeshi walked along the side of the clubroom near the sports ground, when a lone student came out from one of the storage sheds and considerably waved his hand.

In fact, even from a distance, Takeshi was quite familiar with this person, so he

called out to them.

“Good morning Ida.”

“Yo!”

The person who approached was Ida, and they were in the same class.

As the distance narrowed, an unpleasant sparkle was noticed from his hair.

Spiky, blond hair held up by wax and dressed in clothes that were not allowed to be worn at school.

Seeing that gaudy colored T-shirt, Takeshi wryly smiled.

“It will anger sensei[6] if you wear those clothes.”

Takeshi pointed at the bright red T-shirt while Ida’s face formed a sneer.

“Things like wearing a uniform during a holiday are meant for the military right?”

Takeshi wanted to ask Ida why he was at school during break when he wasn’t a member of any clubs.

“Makeup classes, makeup classes. Is Nanase here for club activities? It must be troublesome.”

“It’s not troublesome if I like doing it.”

It was better than his house and he felt it was more reasonable to be praised for being here, but he kept silent.

For some reason, Ida restlessly looked around.

“What’s wrong?”

“Well, if people saw us meeting then your reputation would be hurt.”

“Reputation huh……”

“No, it’s true.”

For some reason Ida felt relieved after he checked his surroundings.

It may seem strange to see these two together, Ida, who by all appearances was a Yankee,[7] and the Kendo devotee Takeshi who is seen as serious when

praised and dark-natured when criticized.

Because of his outward appearance, Ida was known as a flamboyant person around school.

That did not mean that there were no other students with dyed hair, many of the sensei did not worry about that. Ida was just unusual because he was assertive and had a fierce presence, furthermore, he had evil looking eyes and used the Osaka dialect,[8] so even another classmate wouldn't readily approach him.

Takeshi was one who rarely concerned himself over such details.

“I don’t really care,” Takeshi said as Ida raised his eyebrows.

“You don’t care!”

“Ida, frankly it’s not the first time I’ve said that.”

“I don't care, people don't care, there's too much of that around.”

Ida frowned as Takeshi complained to him.

“Isn't it that you give off a different feeling instead of actually not caring? That is, you would worry about anybody who was like me. In short, if you weren't like that then you and I would not be talking.”

Heh, Heh, Ida looked away and regretfully laughed as Takeshi shook his head.

“But if that is the case, why are we talking now?”

“That is my slight kindness.”

Ida hung his head.

“Then maybe I should become a free spirit like Ida. I'll dye my hair, wear a T-shirt like that and then it wouldn't be strange for me to talk with you, right?”

Ida opened his eyes wide when he heard Takeshi's suggestion, it seemed like it was a good idea to him.

“Stop! That would be no good! If such a thing ever happened I would beat you on the head in my own way and send you off to the hospital. The T-shirt is one thing, but what possessed you to say your other ideas!?”

“I can probably guess which store Ida bought that T-Shirt from.”

Takeshi pointed to Ida’s flashy red T-shirt.

However, Ida's eyes hardened as he stared at the serious face of Takeshi.

Then, suddenly, Ida let out a relieved sigh.

“Y, you, the way you look when going on about the T-shirt, such a useless point!”

He suddenly laughed loudly.

“Ida?”

“....It...it's no good...you, haha...have an amusing imagination. Heh, heh.”

For a long time, Ida was rolling on the ground laughing. When it finally subsided, he looked up with watery eyes.

“You say you want to look like me but frankly that would be too much and you should just stop!”

“Is that so?”

“Yeah!”

When Ida flatly said that, the sound of the bell could be heard from the direction of the school building.

“Uwah, this is bad! That's the chime ringing, if I’m late I won't earn my credits. Well see you later Nanase!”

“Ah, yeah……”

“Keep that appearance! The T-shirt is out of the question!”

After saying that last thing with a laugh, Ida stood up and ran away.

"So it wouldn't be suitable?" Takeshi muttered immediately and started to walk in the direction of the club building.

When Takeshi arrived at the club building another first year member was already inside changing clothes.

“Yo, Nanase.”

“Good morning.”

The club room was small, it was only 4 tatami mats [9] wide and had lockers side by side along the wall.

Takeshi pulled out his Kendo uniform and started to change clothes.

The other members had already finished changing clothes and had gone to the dojo.

Takeshi began to hurriedly change his clothes when a friend called out to him.

“Weren’t you with Ida a little while ago? I was watching you talk to him.”

Anyone going to the clubroom would have seen them.

It seems even the class next door was familiar with Ida's face, so he wouldn't be surprised if someone knew that Takeshi was speaking with him, his friend just shook his head in confusion.

“That's impossible. After all, why would you speak with Ida Kazumi.”

“He’s not really a bad guy,” Takeshi said as he put on the navy blue hakama. [10]

“Well, you may be right. It does appear that way a little. Though if the sensei saw you together they might say otherwise.”

The Sakuraya Senior High School is a prep school for students who plan on attending university, the moment they are first years, many of them will pay careful attention to their grades.

Takeshi understood that there was a connection between Ida and his grades, he would be really surprised to know that his classmates would say that was exactly why they kept their distance.

To other classes, Ida appeared to be unfortunate.

Ida would pay attention to the sensei during lectures, Takeshi who was also in the same class witnessed it. Still, being together never had an effect on their grades.

“That guy is pretty ordinary, when I spoke with him today he said he had makeup classes. I think, appearance aside, he's pretty serious.”

Takeshi calmly defended his friend and shrugged his shoulders.

"If you say so. In middle school there were rumors about that guy from various people that hung out in front of the station once awhile, they said he got into a fight with another school."

"Did you even verify the credibility of that rumor? Besides, setting aside the fact it's old, you would expect that he would have had to of come back with one or two injuries. As I thought it's simply just a rumor."

Suddenly, after his friend heard that, he covered his eyes with his arm.

“Really, you and that guy,” he said as he mimicked crying.

“What do you mean?”

Takeshi was confused at his idiotic friend's gesture, and had an angry expression on his face.

“No! No! I wasn't disagreeing. Seriously. I failed at trying to persuade Nanase who has amazing ability!”

“You really are an idiot after all.”

“I am not.”

Takeshi was still angry at his friend but he forced a smile onto his face, after a little while the tone was altered to a murmur.

“Even so, be a little more careful. Once you get very involved in something it becomes hard to separate yourself from it.”

Takeshi was amazed when heard that, and he softened his smile.

“Thank you for your concern, but I'll be okay.”

It's not good for someone's health if they are always worried.

“U Uoou!”

“What the heck was that?”

He was surprised by his friend’s sudden outburst.

“As I thought, Takeshi and that guy!”

Ponto.[11]

Lightly tapped on the shoulder, his friend retreated one step, two steps. Then he suddenly jumped back and opened the door.

“Well, I'll be going ahead of you. Since you're the last one, make sure to shut the door, yoroshiku!”[12]

“Oi!” As it was, he needed to quickly run to the dojo. “Taku,[13] it can’t be helped.”

While he grumbled about his heartless friend, Takeshi looked at the clock. 8:57am. He was unlikely to make it the dojo by 9:00am.

If he was late for training, the second year senpais[14] would force him to do the days chores.

He would have to atone in his outfit. Takeshi finished changing his clothes and hurried out of the clubroom.

He started to run under the blazing sun drenched in sweat.

However, several minutes before he got there, he stopped and realized he had forgot something.

“Not good, I forgot a towel……” he muttered as he looked down at his empty hand.

He was dejected at the fact that he had to turn around and go back to the clubroom.

At this time Takeshi had no idea that this choice would alter his fate in a big way.

If he had known, he would never have gone back to get the towel.

Still, the only thoughts inside Takeshi's head at the moment was the fact that he was late and would be forced to do many chores.

☆☆☆

Part 5[edit]

Takeshi knew that the senpais would notice he forgot his towel and send him

back to the clubroom, in his memories this occurrence was already written that morning.

Takeshi frowned.

He always carefully avoided meeting his family in the morning, however today he had been unlucky. He had met his younger brother Gekkou who was in the bathroom fixing his hair.

Perplexed by this sudden development, Takeshi decided he should greet him, in contrast, Gekkou forcibly pushed him to the side without even looking at him and went to the kitchen.

Unlike Takeshi who had Kendo practice every morning during summer vacation, Gekkou, a third year in middle school, would go to cram school every day. At any rate, because of the time period they had met.

Even if it wasn't summer vacation it was normal for Takeshi to leave at 6:30am because of morning training, however it was very unusual for Gekkou to be awake at that time.

The probability of a near miss and meeting each other was exceedingly low.

Takeshi returned to the clubhouse with a big sigh.

He decided that from tomorrow onwards, it might be better if he was extra careful and left his house earlier.

Even if Gekkou hated him, he still found it hard that even when they met he was ignored. Even if it was his fault. The moment Takeshi grabbed the doorknob of the clubroom and turned it, something shook his body.

“……?”

He had a feeling that he heard something.

“…nega…kete.”

He realized that was a person, they sounded female, but her words were too soft to be audible.

“Is someone there?”

It sounded like it was coming from a different room adjoining the Kendo

clubroom. Takeshi tried to open the door for the Judo Club on the left side. The Judo Club's door was not locked. However, when he looked inside there was nobody there and the smell of sweat caused you to pinch your nose.

"Oi, can someone answer me?"

He knocked on the Volleyball Club's door next, again no voices were heard.

"Was it my imagination?"

Takeshi tilted his head and then returned to the Kendo Clubroom, 5 meters away a door was opened vigorously and a loud sound was heard, he turned around to look.

"……Onega……i, tasuke……"[15]

A person emerged from the shower room and while muttering, collapsed on the ground.

The girl's black hair was the first thing seen. It had spread gently across the ground as the morning sun brilliantly reflected off like a raven's feather.

She wore an unfamiliar uniform. It was a short sleeve blouse, where the sleeves swelled, there were three navy blue lines that went in. Her excessively slender, white arms extended from there as she laid feebly on the ground.

He quietly approached the girl, she had light pink colored lips which were slightly opened and her eyes were closed.

She looked to be the same age as him. Takeshi crouched down and touched her thin shoulders.

"Um, are you okay?"

The spot where he touched her transmitted a burning heat. If he looked closely, he saw she was repeatedly breathing hard from her mouth. It was as if she had sprinted with all her might. Upon further inspection, Takeshi noticed that her knees were bleeding.

"What should I do?"

Takeshi shook her shoulder again.

"Oi, are you okay?"

However, her breathing steadily became rougher.

“I guess it can’t be helped.”

There was nobody else around to call out to because club activities had already started.

Takeshi grabbed her left arm.

“Can you get up? I'll move you somewhere else where you can lie down as much as you want.”

He found it difficult to stand while he dragged her up.

She had fainted and limply leaned against him.

“Ngggggggh.”

It was a risky posture, but he took one step forward, as expected it was harsh. Takeshi crouched once again, this time he put his back closer and pulled her up. Both of her arms loosely dangled down in front of his chest.

Takeshi hesitated on the way he should carry her, somehow he forced himself to stand on one knee.

The girl was short but she had become limp. Because her arms were wrapped around his neck, there was an oppressive weight applied there.

"It's impossible after all, this is a bad way to carry someone."

Using these words as a justification, Takeshi turned around and used both his hands to feel around for her thighs. He put one leg under each arm and once more got up from the ground with her on his back. This was much easier than when he dragged her, however, it would be dreadful if other people saw this situation.

Takeshi started to hurry, he hoped that he would not be seen by anybody else. With this wish inside, Takeshi ran to the school building as he carried this unknown girl.

☆☆☆

Part 6[edit]

Takeshi was strangely embarrassed by the heat and weight of the girl, he felt sorry for her and was nervous as he quickly ran until he arrived at the school infirmary.

At any rate, seemingly fainted he suffered from the sound of a long breath from her by his ear.

Funya funya.[16]

Holding her soft thighs, his hands seemed to sink in.

He was dripping with sweat, one could say it was because he was in such a situation and the fact that he ran in a temperature that exceeded 30 degrees.[17] It would not be unreasonable if she happened to wake up and screamed because of the smell.

Takeshi felt relieved when he finally saw the infirmary at the other side of the hallway.

“Excuse me!!”

He skillfully opened the door with his foot.

“Sensei!?[18] Are you here?”

The infirmary was not locked, but the figure of a person was nowhere to be seen.

Reluctant, Takeshi carried the girl in and approached two beds lined up next to each other. He bowed a little and rolled up the futon with one hand.

He turned his back to the bed to let her slide off onto it and unintentionally took a breath.

"Ha, sure was heavy....."

He noticed the clock on the wall and was astonished at the time.

"Ah, crap! Practice."

Takeshi looked down at the bed, the girl laid there face up and her hands were in a position like she was praying.

“This is bad, but I don’t where someone is and I have to go.”

Being anymore involved with this girl is just asking for trouble.

Since the third year students retired after the previous summer tournament, the Kendo club is presently carried on by the second year students whom are even stricter than the third year students.

When Takeshi was just about to leave the infirmary, the girl behind him gasped painfully.

“Uh……uh……”

He reflexively looked back with vaguely trembling eyelashes.

“Are you awake...?” Takeshi walked back to the bed and called out to her.

“…….s, an.”

“Nii……san……”

“Nii-san?”

In an attempt to understand her words, he brought his face closer to hers.

“Don’t go, please don’t go……”

Her hand suddenly moved, she grabbed onto the sleeve of Takeshi’s Kendo uniform.

“Wait, wait a minute.”

He tried to separate from her, but was grabbed firmly and pulled closer.

From her eyes, a clear drop of water became visible, it attracted attention as it ran down the side of her face.

“Nii-san…….don’t go……”

Ha, a sigh escaped from Takeshi’s mouth. In this girl's current state, if he brushed away her hand it would leave a bad taste in his mouth.

"If this is how it goes, 10 minutes late is the same as 30 minutes late huh."

Unable to move his shoulder, Takeshi one again looked down at her.

With her eyes closed, there was a vague impression that if she were to sit up, she would be a fairly cute child. Silky black hair, black bangs of similar proportion on her forehead, and white skin like an infant's. A rounded nose and a small

mouth below it gave a childish impression.

Perhaps her features had not changed much from when she was a child.

At that time, Takeshi remembered the feeling of carrying her on his back just now and reflexively stretched his back muscles.

“No, no, no,” he felt dizzy and shook his head.

It seemed that it would be best if he immediately shut out of his mind the lingering sensation of her soft arms and thighs on his back.

Takeshi sat down on the edge of the bed. He wanted to go get a chair, but was unable to because she had seized his Kendo uniform.

“……Nii-san……huh?”

He wondered if she also had a fight with her brother. If so, then it would better for them to reconcile as quickly as possible and not end up like them. Because of his own experience, Takeshi knew that if it went too far, they would be unable to mend their relationship.

Just because they are siblings, it did not mean that they would always unconditionally forgive each other.

Takeshi no longer remembered the last time Gekkou had spoken with him. His mother discussed all kinds of things when the school contacted her for an interview, his father did not say much.

The house wasn’t the same as others and it was constant. Even though Takeshi could be seen with his family, his existence was like a shadow in another dimension.

While lost in thought, Takeshi felt the hand that had gripped him had unexpectedly loosened and he lifted his head up. The eyelashes of the girl lying on the bed were faintly trembling, abruptly her eyes opened, they were big and beautiful.

Treating Takeshi as a peeping tom, the girl got up quickly like a spring.

“Who are you!?”

While saying this, the girl kneeled on top of the bed and took out a black object

from the waist of the skirt and pointed it at Takeshi.

“Wh, What….the hell……”

While keeping an eye on the black object, Takeshi also got up from the bed and took a step back.

“Is it a toy?”

However, it was too much of a solemn deep black.

Contrary to being frail, the girl had a sharp light in her gaze, her slender white finger was around the trigger and as she gripped the gun the murderous intent filled the room. With a gun pointed at him, Takeshi became rigid and could only stare blankly at it. The girl’s mind finally cleared up and her eyes wavered.

“Where am I?”

During the brief pause, Takeshi somehow managed to answer.

“Sakuraya Senior High School’s infirmary.”

“The infirmary? Why?”

“Why……”

The muzzle that was fixated on Takeshi’s chest subtly moved, it was an unrealistic situation at first, but he gradually regained his composure even though he still couldn’t comprehend why the girl he saved suddenly pointed a gun at him.

It was inevitable that his sense of reality hadn’t quite set in yet, moreover it was accompanied by a feeling of irritation which grew stronger.

He carried her all the way to the infirmary and stayed near her because he was worried, she then returns the favor by suddenly pulling out a toy that looks like a gun which he couldn't say for certain if it was real or loaded with bullets. Who wouldn’t be offended after that?

“Because you collapsed in front of me previously I was being kind and carried you here.” Takeshi said disagreeably, the girl frowned upon hearing his words.

“You carried me?”

Takeshi who was not used to repeating the same thing, ignored the gun and

turned his back on the girl.

At any rate, he was now confident that it was a toy, even if a bullet was fired from it, it wouldn't hurt that much.

"Because your leg is injured you should get it disinfected first. Come back later and get medicine for it."

Takeshi started to leave the bed, the girl also rose up from her spot as if deciding whether or not she should go as well.

"Wait!"

However, due to her poor footing on the bed as she rose her body wouldn't obey her command and her posture broke.

"Ah……"

Takeshi looked back after hearing her surprised voice and quickly held out his arms.

"That's dang…!"

However, he was not able to slow her momentum as she clung to his arm and stumbled.

"Kyaa!"

"Uwa!"

The girl somehow stopped herself but she broke Takeshi's balance and the fell down together.

At that moment, something like a thread brushed by his cheek and he felt a warm sensation firmly pressed against his lips.

His eyes opened wide from the strange sensation. Until now he had never experienced it.

It was only for a short while but the girl had fallen down and had her arms placed on Takeshi's chest.

He raised his body and separated himself from her.

Takeshi violently blinked his eyes and reviewed what had happened.

“……Ah……ehmm……”

Before his eyes the girl who still had a hand on his chest started to tremble.

It took some time for both of them to grasp what had happened. The girl was the first one to understand.

“IYAAAAA!!” the girl shouted suddenly.

Then, grasping the gun tightly she turned and pointed it at him and started firing.

It was so sudden that all Takeshi couldn’t even see the flash.

Furthermore there were explosions going off by his forehead and the moment he saw them his body felt like it lost its gravity and he flew through the air and subsequently felt a sharp pain run through his back.

“……Uhh……”

His breath became ragged, he was having a hard time breathing.

He was thrown to the middle of the infirmary, knocked down the desk and then rolled on his side.

"Ouch…… What the hell, this."

Takeshi felt sore, he was confused and didn’t know what just happened, and in regards to the girl she was in a complete panic due to this development.

With her hand shaking and the gun still pointed at Takeshi she dropped down onto one knee.

Her body was trembling and the right hand that was pressed onto her left was shaking, but her stance was firm and the gun point would not waver away from Takeshi.

Takeshi could smell a sweet fragrance where the girl's head had been on his gi and the incredible sensation of her lips remained as well.

With exception of his previous thoughts on reality, everything else faded into oblivion and he felt like he fly beyond the horizon to the ends of the universe.

In an instant Takeshi's current condition was blown away, even though he ached all over he was somehow able move his body and get up as the girl

watched him.

She was still frantically grasping the handgun tightly.

Why she had such a thing in her possession, that thing that injured others, he was interested if there was connection between that and why she had collapsed, at the moment that thought was going around in his mind and the scene in front of him was even stranger because of the dull pain felt in his head.

“Hey,” Takeshi called out, but the girl remained silent.

“I, wasn’t I shot at with that gun? Despite that…”

Takeshi put his hand on his forehead.

“I don’t seem hurt here. Why is that?

If it was a real gun, he should without a doubt be dead. However, the girl who is holding the gun is glaring at Takeshi.

“It was a complete accident. Won’t you pretend it never happened? It’s not something we should count.”

Finally, the girl spoke. “How can you even say such a detestable thing? Furthermore, stay away from me!” She pouted and raised her shoulder up like an angry cat.

Takeshi incessantly blinked his eyes.

“Err, what thing is completely detestable?”

However, despite her remarks, she still remembered and in the end she couldn’t deny the sensation.

“What, why? With my mouth!"

“Er, about that……I’m sorry.”

Even though he was trying to apologize honestly, her shoulders were still trembling in anger.

“As I thought, you are the lowest!”

With the gun point shaking while moving up and down, she continued to be angry at Takeshi.

"It can't be helped. That something like this happened for the first time," Takeshi said as he backed away from the girl who had lost her temper.

The girl finally stopped wielding the gun, she gave a suspicious look, and asked a question. “……First time?”

“Ah,” Takeshi nodded.

Even though the girl was still suspicious of Takeshi, she slowly lowered her gun. Then while feeling dejected, lowered her head and murmured.

“……Re, really……It’s also my……first time……”

After she said so in a low voice, her cheeks flushed red because of embarrassment rather than anger.

Because of her shy expression, Takeshi also became embarrassed.

“Go, Good! Now we can pretend it didn’t happen.”

Upon Takeshi’s proposal the girl vigorously nodded her head in agreement.

“Yeah. You agree. Un un.”

She holstered the gun she was holding in between her skirt waist and lower back, then with both her hands she covered her cheeks, as if she was trying to forget while her eyes were tightly shut.

“Anyway……let me see, what is your name?” Takeshi inquired so he could call a doctor to treat the girl’s injuries.

“Don’t have a name.”

“Ah, I see. Then I will call you Kiku. I’m Nanase Takeshi, a first year at this school.”

Then, though she was still troubled she looked up in order to get a further explanation.

“I don't give my name unless I have to because it's not allowed.”

Hmmm, a competition to remain nameless, if that's the case then you can call me Gonba-san. I am Gonba-san the partner for your first kiss.

Upon hearing those words she recalled what happened and in embarrassment tightly gripped her skirt, she averted her eyes and suddenly said her name.

“Mui. I am Aiba Mui.”

Relieved by her answer, Takeshi smiled in return.

“Well, come over here so I can disinfect……”

At that time, Takeshi noticed another abnormality.

“Wha, what, is this!!”

Floating around the top part of the room there was a hazy dust shining.

It was a faint yellow radiance which floated in the air.

“Light……smoke?”

It was light and fluffy and moved up and down, a portion of it fell down in front

of the eyes, and gently brushed the fingertips.

Then, it was extremely likely that it was real smoke, it dispersed easily when it touched the fingertips.

Whether Takeshi touched or didn't touch it, it easily collapsed and disappeared.

“……It’s a lie right……What should I do……”

Mui’s voice sounded confused, Takeshi’s line of sight was focused up in the air.

If the shining smoke was observed further, it appeared at first that it was scattered straight lines.

At places where Mui shot at there were straight lined vapor trails, Takeshi was soon drawn to them, and they vanished like before.

Trying to go. That was the feeling.

“I……my intention……”

Flustered, Mui repeatedly moved her head from left to right.

After the smoke, Takeshi changed his line of sight to her, finally he realized something.

“Something came out from that gun. Pale yellow color……it seems like it was shining smoke.”

“……I’m sorry, I’m very sorry……I……”

Takeshi supposed that Mui had apologized because she shot her gun at his body.

However, it could be said Mui's apology should be even more profound and heavy. This would be the expectation after recognizing the fact that she had shot at him.

Takeshi had seen the shining line of smoke gradually fade, unexpectedly he discovered another small shining spot behind Mui, and he tilted his head in confusion.

Instead of it being yellow, it was reddish in color.

“What is that, an insect?”

Something fluffy came from the vicinity of the door and it moved up, down, left and right as it approached Mui.

It appeared to be similar to a tiny fly.

However, just a moment ago that same smoke, had faintly shined in a vermilion color.

Attracted by Takeshi’s gaze, Mui turned her head to look back.

And then, the girl reflexively stiffened her body.

“It’s an insect used to search for the enemy.”

Mui’s voice became strained.

“Found you, you can’t escape anymore.”

“Found? Eh? What?”

The girl dashed towards Takeshi who was carelessly standing up in the middle of the room.

“Listen up, quickly get over here!”

Because it was said in such a strong tone of voice, Takeshi involuntarily obeyed.

At that moment, the door abruptly opened and two dark shadows obstructed the way.

☆☆☆

Part 7[edit]

Before they could see the person, they heard them.

“This game of tag is finished.”

It was a cold, low voice.

Next to Takeshi, Mui's body pitched and trembled.

“Nii-san.”

At Mui’s words, Takeshi turned towards her with a puzzled expression.

“Nii-san?”

Because of the backlight, Takeshi could not see the face of the opponent and only the silhouette of the man was visible.

The figure was a slender man. If that was all, then one would think of him as the type that could be found anywhere.

However, there was an abnormality.

From the man’s hand departed something that was similar to shining smoke.

A gas which was a pale light blue color like the sky on a clear, sunny day was drifting from both his hands.

“Come over here.”

A man came into the room.

Abruptly, Mui grabbed onto Takeshi’s Kendo Gi.

Because of her excessive use of force, the uniform was being stretched in opposite directions and nearly fell off his shoulder.

“I DON’T WANT TO.”

There was a discrepancy between her voice and speech, despite being frail.

Furthermore, the man’s shadow kept on drawing nearer.

“Nii-san, I beg you……return to your true self.”

Mui cast her eyes downward.

Rather than talking to the man, it was directed towards the floor.

“……Nii-san, you’re not a <Trailer>”

Takeshi could only see the top of Mui's head because she was looking down, the man who was standing in the doorway alternated his gaze between the two.

The man finally replied back.

“How many times I have to tell you? I am not your oni.”[19]

Mui raised her head as if it was repelled and cried.

“Nii-san! I am your.....cherished.....”

However, her voice gradually went towards the floor.

“<Trailer> overwrote your memory. Why won’t you believe me? My words, you must have sensed a little something in them.”

The man had no intention to reply.

“Tsuganashi, this person continues to be noisy.”

A different voice came from behind.

Another dark shadow stood in the hallway on the other side of the door.

It was a petite and slender shadow.

As the shadow approached Mui's brother, Tsuganashi, it looked even smaller.

For a moment, Takeshi thought the youth was a middle school student.

It was a bony physique with a little roundness, they wore a plain khaki parka and light blue knee length shorts, and their hair was fluffy and in a short cut style.

It was understood she was a girl because of her big eyes and higher pitch of voice.

Her big and wide eyes opened wider as she looked at Mui and Takeshi and then laughed.

However, there was a sneer mixed in with her laughter.

"Let's quickly finish this and head back. It's difficult with color in this close of a proximity."

Saying these words, the girl held onto Tsuganashi’s arm, when Mui saw this her expression distorted.

At the same time, two other men were approaching in the hallway.

Mui immediately interposed herself in between and pulled out her gun.

Scowling, Tsuganashi said some dangerous words.

“It can’t be helped. We'll have to take her with force.”

“Understood.”

“Ok-aay!”

“All right.”

Three people in succession acknowledged his instruction.

Takeshi could not completely grasp all of his surrounding situation.

What was clear, however, was that these people intended to use force to take Mui.

The youth with black hair was Mui’s brother, the other three, who the heck were they?

Then, a familiar looking shining smoke was released from all four people right before their eyes.

The young man known as Tsuganashi, was definitely Mui’s brother, he gave that kind of feeling.

Wet black hair, white skin, and eyes that were similar to Mui’s.

However, you wouldn’t understand why the extent of his attention was so cruel in regards to Mui.

No matter how you look at it, his eyes are not the kind of eyes that you use to

look at your younger sister.

Suddenly, for a minute, Takeshi thought about his brother Gekkou.

In Gekkou's eyes, Takeshi wondered if he saw him in the same way?

No, the eyes of that guy……

The glare from his eyes was tinged with heat and seethed with hatred.

In this way he was cold and heartless.

Four people entered the school infirmary, at the back, a handsome man with a good physique closed the door behind him.

Mui pulled Takeshi and together they retreated to the back of the room.

One of the two men behind Mui's brother was tall and lanky with drooping eyes, he had bad taste in clothing and was wearing a shirt with a green amoeba drawn on it.

Then there was a question of the last person. He didn't seem to be too old, but no matter how you looked at it he definitely was not a student in school.

His clothes consisted of a black tank top and similar black straight jeans, he was just a little bit taller than Takeshi.

His arms and chest had thick muscles, Takeshi understood that the man must have done some form of martial arts.

He had piercing eyes and when he smiled his mouth became distorted.

If anyone saw his appearance standing before a convenience store, it would be a most unpleasant meeting and they would want to leave as quickly as possible.

Takeshi did not understand the situation, it would be abnormal if he could.

At first nothing could be seen hanging from the man's waist.

The leather belt worn around his waist looked normal, however, there was a scabbard affixed with a sword sheathed.

Takeshi had seen a real sword several times before, whether it was fake or genuine, there was a hilt protruding from the sheath.

After he saw those, it was without a doubt a genuine sword.

Furthermore it was not a Japanese sword, the width of the scabbard's curvature was wide, a trait of a Western sword.

Mui's brother also wore a similar belt on his waist, the difference was that a narrow sword was hung from there instead.

And then, what made Takeshi the most uneasy was that there were four people who produced light smoke.

Mui produced the same smoke and they all had a different color.

The shoulder bag which was hung on the girl's shoulder, the sword which was hung on the handsome man's waist, and the last person who carried an attaché case, each one of them released a different colored shining gas, Green, White, and Red.

Mui's brother released a shining gas that was pale blue in color from the white gloves on his hands.

Next to him, Mui's face had reached a state that went beyond pale.

Her hand grabbed Takeshi's sleeve, right now she needed to calm down and control her feelings, she opened her mouth to say something but no words would come out and remained silent.

Takeshi perceived that Mui had become scared.

Tsuganashi was Mui's brother, yet he declared he would take her by force.

In other words, they are her enemies.

Next to the confused Takeshi, Mui was simply staring straight at her brother.

There might be a chance of victory against four people, she wasn't stupid, and right now her top priority was to escape from here with Takeshi.

However, Takeshi had considered something else.

Before Mui could take any action, Takeshi pulled her forcibly behind him.

"Hey, what!?"

Surprised by Takehsi, Mui's hand was being pulled by him as he started to run to the window in the back.

“Don’t argue with me.”

Immediately, Mui understood Takeshi’s intention.

The door was not an option with them standing there, so his intention was to escape through the window.

The infirmary was on the first floor, so it would be easy to escape through the window.

However, Mui knew that it wouldn’t be that easy.

Sure enough, Tsuganashi drew his saber from the scabbard and turned the edge towards them.

Takeshi did not see him.

However, the moment he touched the window with his hand to open it, a sharp pain like electricity ran through his fingertips.

He immediately let go, but the tip of his middle finger and index finger on his right hand was red.

“Look!” Mui told Takeshi.

It was then that Takeshi noticed it for the first time.

The outer edges of the window frame had been covered in a thick ice.

“Wh, what is going on?”

Because he touched the ice, he felt a freezing pain.

Unlike Takeshi who was trembling, Mui turned around and faced them.

“Nii-san, if you make a mistake you will risk losing your power!”

Three out of the four people were laughing.

Tsuganshi did not laugh and replied back as he sheathed his Saber.

“I was not attacking, I was trapping.”

While Mui was exchanging words with them, Takeshi just stared at the window stunned.

Strange shining smoke from the gun as well as the sword, he somehow

understood to this extent.

However, this was clearly different.

This was impossible.

Takeshi turned away from the window and gazed at the men and woman of the four people with a look of awe.

“Y, you.....what the heck did you just do?”

It was obvious that the voice he finally mustered was trembling.

“I’ll call someone!!”

Even though it was pitiful, Takeshi thought this much was necessary.

Takeshi thought that even if he did call out at this time nobody would immediately appear, for the time being he had no choice but to maintain the bluff at all costs.

“Tsuganashi, let me handle this.”

The man from before with evil eyes and a good physique stepped forward.

“If I capture that man over there then Aiba Mui will surely not run away.”

He was holding the pommel of the sword hung at his waist.

“That’s fine, but don’t use magic.”

Takeshi heard Tsuganashi tell the man.

—Magic? I have a feeling that’s what he just said.

—Was it my imagination?

Certainly the window’s appearance was abnormal.

Just a little while ago it was a normal window.

Even so, Takeshi thought that there was a logical reason for it.

Science was a more realistic explanation.

However, there was not a single person who could answer Takeshi’s question.

On the contrary, there was no use in trying to repeatedly stab at the questions.

It’s the same even now.

Among the four people the man with piercing eyes talked the most, he was permitted to take action, he squeezed the handle of his sword as he moved towards the middle of the room with Takeshi in his line of sight.

Takeshi had to do something to distract the man’s attention and search for another way to escape.

At that moment, the sun reflected off of a cleaning tool that was left out.

There was no time to ponder on it.

Moving several steps to the side, Takeshi grabbed the broom that was leaning against the wall.

Using his foot, he broke off the straw part of the broom forcibly and was left with just the handle.

He wielded it seriously to ensure there were no obstructions to his body.

Having done that, the broom became a long rod shaped weapon.

“I don’t know what the circumstances are, but no matter how I look it you people are bad guys.”

The moment Takeshi’s posture changed into a stance, the man no longer saw it as a broom but a weapon.

“……”

“……”

Takeshi and the man glared at each other, his expression remained undisturbed, but there was an interest showing in his eyes for the first time.

He smiled broadly.

“Humph, how interesting.”

The man laughed as his expression became more brutal.

Mui who was next to Takeshi, watched him become more uneasy when she suddenly hit upon an idea and said: “Can you stall and give me a little bit of time? I am going to try and open the window.”

Though the ice had completely covered the window, Mui thought that it was still possible so she would somehow figure it out one way or another, Takeshi could only nod his head in agreement.

It was already too late anyways, the man had drawn his sword and was energetically approaching.

Takeshi could see an ominous glint reflected off the drawn sword.

Truly there was a difference from a Japanese sword, you could see it was a thick double edged blade meant to be used as a tool to kill a human and not to just strike them.

You could see it was an absurdly large sword, just measuring it with the eyes it must have weighed at least 2 Kilos, yet the man was only using one hand.

He had a vision of receiving a heavy overhead blow, immediately after that the broom made bishitsu sound and split.

There was no question what would happen when iron and bamboo clashed.

Oddly enough, it didn't split in half.

To understand, receive and stop it was fortunate, Takeshi shuffled his legs and retreated backwards.

Immediately the man took aim halfway up and thrust.

Parrying it diagonally, even though the sword was longer than the broom Takeshi thrust at the opponent's side with all his might.

However, it was not very effective and all it did was stagger him a little.

"Hmm, isn't that nice."

"It's unusual to see Oigami pressured."

He heard some prefatory words from the other man in the door who was his friend turned spectator.

His fury was ignited when he was hit with the broom.

He didn't really have any intention of slashing, however his hand was hit to alter the trajectory of his attack.

Morever, Takeshi noticed this change however it appeared that Oigami's friend did not.

"Eat this!!"

Oigami took a large step forward and thrust his sword towards Takeshi.

Takeshi firmly gripped the handle of the broom stick.

Then, he closely watched the trajectory of the sword.

When handle hit the tip, an intense roar similar to a lightning strike resounded.

"Wh……at……"

The man's expression from earlier turned into one of shock, Takeshi's hand had not let go of the broom.

There was portion that was split and curved on both sides, but where the broom had pierced the edge a silver color shined.

"Damn you, what the hell did you do?!"

The man tried to shake his sword loose, however it was firmly caught in between and could not be removed.

Takeshi stepped back and searched around to see if he could find something else he could use as a weapon, but of course, it's never that convenient.

He looked over at Mui, she had shot her gun towards the window.

However, the gunshot you would hear on a TV never occurred.

A vivid yellow color was shot from the muzzle, it hit the window but barely even dented the ice.

It looked like it had barely even come close.

Takeshi threw away broom he had into the trash, he then went back to where he got the broom from and pulled out a mop.

Unlike the broom, part of the handle was made out of plastic.

He couldn't expect much from the durability of the plastic but it was a situation where he could not leisurely complain.

Takeshi turned around from the locker and in no time used the mop handle to

catch the edge of the sword.

The man who had come up right behind him was using all his strength to lean forward and put pressure on Takeshi from above.

They were close enough where they felt each other's heavy breathing across their face.

The man was not thinking about going easy, immediately after he drew back and once more used all his strength to strike.

In the next moment a confusing scene filled Takeshi's mind, he moved his hands on the mop to a point where he received and avoided the man's strike.

However, Takeshi knew that it was already too late.

It would have been easy to avoid if he could twist his stance.

At that moment, another scene was shown.

This time Takeshi was influenced to believe it.

Although Takeshi was able to avoid the previous thrust, the handle of the mop had a split on the section where he hit the back of the man's hand.

Before Takeshi heard the man groan, he discarded the mop he was holding onto.

The man was no longer armed, the sword which he had let go was falling to the floor.

Takeshi had quickly picked up the heavy sword, he then shouted to Mui.

Takeshi had seen what he had to do.

"Mui, lower your head!!"

Mui looked back when she heard Takeshi's voice.

The when she saw the sword in Takeshi's hand she reflexively crouched down.

Takeshi threw the sword towards the window that had been frozen.

It shattered the ice and glass, all the pieces came crashing down like an avalanche, immediately after Mui jumped onto the frame.

The two of them jumped out of the window into the summer day like it was a

different world, Takeshi looked back as he continued to run.

☆☆☆

Part 8[edit]

The four Magicians had not yet moved.

“Aren’t we going to pursue them?”

It was the voice of the person who had manipulated the insect used to search, Ushiwaka.

Then, Hotaro the only girl pouted.

“That guy was also a magician. Ne~ [20] don’t you think so?”

All four of them had noticed that fact about Takeshi.

Rather, it would have been strange if they didn’t notice.

It was simply impossible for a normal human to avoid Oigami Takao’s swordsmanship.

Even if he was wearing a Kendo Gi, assuming he was that talented, his movement at that time had transcended the limits of ordinary humans.

He should not have known how to avoid.

“Ushikawa, use your flies to trace them.”

Tsuganashi could not answer Hotaro’s question and instead spoke to Ushikawa.

To change a person into a magician is serious matter, but to allow them to escape as well is considered a felony.

“Understood.”

With a nod, Ushikawa put his attaché case on the floor and pulled out a box from within.

“By the way, it’s not a fly, don’t you listen? It’s a butterfly, a fly has too limited of a range. Those guys have probably already moved quite far, from the beginning these insects have been good for long distance searching.”

“Do whatever you like.”

At Tsuganashi’s response, Ushikawa had a faint smile.

“Well then, becaue today is a good day I’ll use a Black Swallowtail. The Black Swallowtail is a good match with Aiba Mui.”

When Hotaro heard that she hugged her shoulders and yelled out.

“Uwa, kimo[21]!!."

A truly revolting feeling from the bottom of her heart could not help but make her grimace at the current situation.

“You really are disgusting.”

“Be at ease, I have no interest in Hotaro as a female. The only females I am interested in are the ones that don’t have a subdued shine.

Ushikawa retorted to Hotaro without even glancing up.

“Are you looking for a fight? Do you want to fight? If so then I’ll give you a good one.”

The shoulder bag that Hotaro had in her hand started to stretch out, Tsuganashi grabbed a hold of the bag.

“Stop it, Hotaro.”

“BUT….”

Hotaro clung to Tsuganashi’s arm and started to protest but was interrupted by Oigamai Takao’s voice.

At the same time the only desk in the room was broken in half.

His sword was lying under the window.

When he removed his fist from the desk, Oigami glared at Tsuganshi.

“That was an Evasion ability.”

Oigami was grinding his teeth in aggravation while Hotaro just ridiculed him as she clung to Tsuganashi’s arm.

“AhAh, he’s a person with same Evasion Magic ability as you. If he didn’t have it then there would have been no way for him to avoid your attacks. What kind

of person is he?”

Oigami was resentful, but he slowly started to broadly smile.

It was a wicked smile and anybody who saw it would shiver in fear.

When Hotaro saw it, she squeezed Tsuganashi’s arm even tighter.

“Rather than that, I’m sure you heard that we’re in a school.”

“So it seems.”

On Hotaro’s warning, Tsuganashi turned on his heel.

“Sorry for troubling you. Let’s go.”

“Ha~i.”

Looking back at the room once, Oigami picked up his sword and resheathed it, as he walked out he saw the broken broom lying there.

The tip of the sword had accurately exposed the core of the broom when it hit, Takeshi’s pupil was black. Then when he threw the sword towards the window his pupil was similar to a deep purple color during twilight.

In other words, when he invoked his Evasion Magic Ability his pupil changed to a purple color, it was risky to display its activation, however, he was only human.

As he exited to the hallway he stifled a laugh, because of this knowledge Oigami imagined that it would be easy capture Aiba Mui regardless of the interference from the new magician, he had the desire to meet up with them again soon.

He had a firm conviction that if he fought with that magician again he would emerge victorious.

Translator's Notes and References[edit]

1. ↑ Term used for young ladies from a noble or rich family.
2. ↑ Sound effect of grunting in agreement
3. ↑ I guess the easiest understanding would be the easy life

4. ↑ I have no idea where this quote is from
5. ↑ In Kendo, a practitioner is given ranks, it starts at 1st-Dan goes to 8th-Dan which is the highest rank someone can attain now.
6. ↑ Teacher
7. ↑ Delinquent
8. ↑ It's generalized as Kansai dialect, but the author specifically wrote Osaka-ben
9. ↑ A way to measure the size of rooms in Japan, approximately.88m by 1.76m for the Tokyo area, other areas have their own measurements.
10. ↑ Traditional Japanese clothing worn by men, though today you can see both sexes wearing it
11. ↑ Onomatopoeia for hitting the shoulder
12. ↑ Generally a greeting when meeting someone, in this case it's being used as "I'm counting on you"
13. ↑ Words of exasperation
14. ↑ Senior, sometimes written as sempai
15. ↑ "Please save." I kept the original in to go along with the dialogue from earlier
16. ↑ Onomatopoeia
17. ↑ Celsius, 86 degrees Fahrenheit
18. ↑ This time it's referring to the school Nurse.
19. ↑ Brother.
20. ↑ Hey is what it actually translates but you knew that already right? I left it as is, I thought it may have reinforced the fact that she was pouting.
21. ↑ Disgusting

Chapter 2 - The Collapsing World & Ghost Trailer

Chapter 2 – The Collapsing World and Ghost Trailer[edit]

Part 1[edit]

The gate to the entrance was not locked.

Takeshi felt dejected that his mother was home.

His brother would be at cram school and his father would be working.

The house had been built around 10 years ago, his father worked a lot to buy the place and hardly ever came home.

It was what a person would consider my home.

However, Takeshi couldn't say it was comfortable in there.

Although Takeshi would be instantly be denied if he brought back any other girl besides Kurumi inside his house.

Takeshi thought it would be better if he didn't have anyone, but recently his thoughts have changed.

Perhaps if had brought her, his parent's thoughts might have changed and they would have been able to talk.

Takeshi thought that he might have wanted to see that a little.

He ran away from school with his Kendo Gi, when he got to the entrance of his house he motioned to the person behind to come inside.

Mui looked nervous, it was like she had gone to the house of some unrelated influential person.

Just as Mui was about to go up the stairs, the living room door down the hall opened up.

"Ah, he, hello," Mui greeted in a loud voice behind Takeshi.

However, his mother's expression didn't change.

“Um, excuse me for intruding on you.”

Mui bowed, while his mother who entered the hall murmured “By all means.”

His mother walked by where Takeshi and Mui stood, put on her shoes, grabbed the parasol that was hung next to the shoebox, and quickly left the house.

She was going out to shop in the neighborhood because she had an Eco-bag [1] hung over her shoulder.

Takeshi hid his dejected expression from Mui, went up the stairs to the hallway and took off his shoes.

“Don’t let it bother you. That person, she’s always been like that.”

“Eh? Really?”

Mui had been watching his mother leave, when she heard Takeshi say that, she looked over her shoulder at him.

“Is she your mother?”

“Yeah. That’s my mom.”[2]

Takeshi answered curtly to prevent any further inquiries, Mui slowly closed the door behind her.

“You can go to my room first, it’s on the left side of the second floor, I’m going to get us some drinks.”

“……Okay.”

Takeshi left Mui at the door in the entrance and entered the kitchen.

—It probably appeared to his mother that her son had come home in his Kendo Gi with an unknown girl……

Takeshi took a deep sight with Haa sound.

Takeshi was used to his mother’s indifference and that kind of reaction was good for the people she had never met.

Takeshi shook his head several times to pull himself together, then opened the refrigerator door.

☆☆☆

Part 2[edit]

Mui went upstairs as told and entered Takeshi's room.

His room had an orderly atmosphere and he did not have a lot of possessions.

His bed was by the wall and his desk was by the window. He had a single small bookshelf standing by itself and he didn't have a single poster or decoration.

Mui had entered his room but just stood there as she did not know where she could sit.

There was only the chair for the desk and she would feel shy if she sat on his bed.

Mui recalled her earlier meeting with Takeshi's mother at the entrance.

She had facial features similar to Takeshi and perhaps she had felt that cold atmosphere from her because she wasn't a very sociable person.

—That person, it feels like she had seen her somewhere before……

Mui went across the room to the only window and shut the curtains because it was less likely that they would be discovered by their pursuers.

Almost unconsciously, she sat down on the bed which was carefully arranged.

Then, once again she recalled the face of Takeshi's mother and became puzzled.

—Was she a celebrity?

—She understood that she was a magician the moment she saw her.

Mui's shoulders sagged. Her beautiful black hair that was similar to enamel like her brother's, fell down in front and concealed her face.

"Mou, I really am completely useless," she said, her voice unintentionally loud.

Just what could she do, she knew how serious the current situation was.

For example, the fact that she will receive punishment no matter what will not change.

She had to somehow save her benefactor, that's right, there was no use

crying, it might be cruel but she could not bear to not tell him anything.

“Sorry to keep you waiting. All we had was tea and cola in the fridge.”

Unaware of Mui’s distress, Takeshi came into the room with a cup on a tray.

“Ah, er. Please don’t trouble yourself with me.”

Looking at the tray that was placed in front of her, Mui looked up at Takeshi and laughed with *fufu* sound.

“What?”

”Because, you brought both tea and cola.”

Three cups had been placed on the tray.

There was cola in two of them and tea in one.

There were two people, so there was one too many.

“My bad. I didn’t know which one would be good,” said Takeshi with a sullen expression.

Taking the chair from the desk, Takeshi sat down in front of Mui who was on the bed.

“Thank you. Then, I’ll take the tea.”

Takeshi watched Mui take the cup and put it to her mouth. He then said: “That uniform……”

“Eh?”

“Nah, it’s just that, I don’t think I have ever seen that uniform before.”

“……”

Mui looked down at her uniform.

It was a navy blue short sleeved blouse with three lines on the sleeve and a green plaid ribbon on the chest. Her legs extended from a dark blue pleated skirt and the socks were self-designated.

“I don’t think I am familiar……which school is that from?”

Mui shifted her gaze away [3] and Takeshi shook his head.

“No, it’s fine.”

Mui felt that Takeshi wanted an explanation but he wouldn’t pursue it any further.

She felt sorry, but she had considered the fact that she didn’t want to get him involved any further.

Mui wanted to leave things as they were, part from Takeshi here and return to her own world.

But, even if she wanted to, that was no longer possible.

Mui quietly returned the cup with its contents half drank to the tray.

“Have you seen it yet?” she asked.

“What?” Takeshi asked back.

“Have you seen……like this?”

Mui stood up and pulled out her gun, and immediately shot it.

“Knock it off!”

Takeshi fell backwards out of the chair he was sitting in.

One centimeter away a wind traveled by his ear which made his body shudder.

Light vigorously hit the wall, and with a *bachibachi* sound it scattered.

But when Takeshi looked back at the wall, there was not a single scratch on it.

No bullet had entered.

The bright yellow flash that had been fired instead, seemed to have been charged with electricity.

When it scattered in all four directions, the small flash of lightning branched and then disappeared.

“As I thought, you can see it.”

Mui’s voice clearly sounded disappointed.

“I saw it. It had an aura similar to light.”

“It’s a special type of particle.”

Mui tucked the gun in her skirt, and sat down again.

Takeshi who sat opposite of her diverted his look.

“I guess I should give you an explanation.”

Takeshi was annoyed that she abruptly discharged her gun, but aside from that it looked she had resolved herself about something, when she suddenly looked at him straight in the eyes for the first time, Takeshi started to feel uneasy.

He didn’t want to hear anything.

Not about their pursuers, not about her uniform, not about her gun, and not about all the supernatural phenomenon, it was one thing after another.

But, that did not stop Mui from talking.

“It’s a particle that can only be seen by a magician.”

“That’s what you say!” Takeshi stood up from his chair and yelled out in order to reject her words.

Still, she never once turned her gaze away and stared straight at Takeshi.

“Even I found it unreasonable to give you an explanation. But, it’s impossible otherwise.”

Takeshi folded his arms and looked away from her.

“I am a magician.”

Mui said that much too readily, almost as if she was saying something simple like “I am a high school girl.”

“The guys who were chasing me are also magicians.”

Takeshi did not feel like listening.

Just now she acted foolishly, if that was the case then maybe he should consider that she wanted to return somewhere.

“You know, I really did not want to hear anything at all, you were being chased and I thought you just wanted to bring someone along with you, it’s okay, however, you just wanted to return home right?” Takeshi who was turned away, asked her in a tight tone.

“Did I not just say that a little while ago? Weren’t you listening?”

“……”

“I told you that the aura or smoke you saw before was a special particle that only magicians can see. In other words, you also bear the burden of being a magician.”

Before, Takeshi would have been able to reject everything including her words.

“My bad, I really am troubled by this. I want to be able to stay home.”

“Then listen properly!”

“I, am not religious so therefore I don’t know what kind of solicitation to give.”

“I’m not religious?”

“For generations my family has been Buddhists. Well, they are only Buddhist when it comes to funerals. Besides, no matter how you look at it, there doesn’t seem like there is any money here. Well, the house is two stories, but we’re just barely getting by.”

Takeshi started unilaterally speaking about unrelated things, Mui standing up, forcefully grabbed Takeshi’s shoulder and tried turn him around to face her.

“Listen to me seriously. I am trying to make you aware of the fact that you can use magic!”

Takeshi looked over his shoulder which was forcefully grabbed closer.

“……Is something the matter?”

“When you threw that sword towards the window at school the color of your pupil became purple.”

Mui’s face was earnestly coming closer.

“Ba……bakabakashii. If you are seriously saying that, then you are quite messed up in the head.”

In an attempt to escape from Mui, Takeshi shook off her hand and separated from her like there was a disease.

Mui bit her lips tightly and glared at Takeshi.

“Wh, what?”

Takeshi tried not to be overpowered by her gaze and glared back at her, once again she approached him with her hand on her chest.

“If I do this, then whether or not you like it, you might start to understand what you can do.”

In that moment, Takeshi’s body was gently lifted off the floor a few centimeters.

“Uwa!!”

A few seconds later his feet which had been separated from the floor were returned.

“No…… No……No way……!”

“You can also do this.”

Mui let go of him, there was not a hint of an expression that said she was lying.

Instead, she awkwardly hung her head in shame and then suddenly kneeled down in front of Takeshi.

“I’m sorry.”

Her head had touched the floor.

Surprised by her sudden action, all Takeshi could do was look down.

Once again, Mui bowed down into a position like a cat.

“I really am sorry!”

After Mui said that, she slowly looked up and saw that Takeshi was bewildered.

With tears in her eyes, she said, “I changed you into a magician.”

There was too much remorse in her voice for her to have been joking.

Mui’s voice and facial expression, along with the fact that both her fists were trembling told him everything.

Somehow, Takeshi couldn’t bring himself to throw her out of his house, his original intention was shaken by her earnestness.

“I didn’t think something like this would happen. Truly. It was not my intention to cause trouble for everyone. But……I just wanted to bring back Nii-san.”

Tears had accumulated around her eyes and large drops began to fall onto the carpet.

It became painful for Takeshi to watch her, with a big sigh, he sat down in front of her.

There wasn’t a single guy who could throw her out after listening to her, watching her bow her head in apology, and then crying.

With a reluctant tone Takeshi said, “Maa, I don’t quite understand what’s going on, yet I will still listen to you.”

From Mui’s eyes tear drops continued to fall.

She squeezed her eyes shut with all her strength in order to resist crying aloud. It was so pitiable that Takeshi faced away and said, “If you are crying when you ask I can’t hear you properly.”

“I’m not.”

There was a reply, but it had become nasally.

No, she was still crying.

Her retort was as expected and Takeshi could only nod his head.

☆☆☆

Part 3[edit]

“Magicians aren’t born naturally.”

When she had finally settled down, she sat on the bed and said that.

“From the start, all humans possess a very miniscule amount of magic power. But as they grow into adults it becomes weakened. It’s approximately around the age of 25 when the pores which release magic power are closed and they can no longer become a magician. When a child comes into contact with magic power, the cells are stimulated and the pores open up in the body and they can create magic. In other words they become a magician.”

“You don’t possibly mean……”

Takeshi suddenly understood something that had occurred to him.

It was at the school infirmary when Mui fired her gun.

“Right. When I shot at you with my gun your body was stimulated. In other words, I believe you became a magician at that time.”

Astonished, Takeshi just stared at her.

“As you saw shortly afterwards, among the people who had come was my brother.”

“That person was Tsuganashi?”

The tall, scary man with black hair, Takeshi was murmuring.

“Un. That was my nii-san. But, he’s different now.”

Mui said in a sorrowful tone.

“His memory has been changed by <Ghost Trailer>”

“Ghost……?”

“<Ghost Trailer>. ‘They are a spirit vanguard’[4] and are referred to as a community.”

When Takeshi heard Mui’s quiet voice, feelings of curiosity helped him calm down.

Sitting in front her shoulders were small and slender, with her head hanging down, Takeshi outstretched one hand a little bit.

Takeshi was still hesitant to believe Mui.

It didn’t matter what kind of person Mui was, after coming this far, he had to listen to the end, that much had not changed.

“They are trying to undermine the ideal of a magician.”

Mui had regained her composure.

That did not mean that her feelings of guilt towards Takeshi had vanished, after this Mui would have to face the reality of this issue.

“When you first saw magic, were you afraid? Or were you not afraid?”

Mui asked, Takeshi did not interrupt.

Then, Mui gave a small nod, as if it was natural.

“It’s generally the same reaction when a person sees magic. Scared, startled, because they don’t understand it, they reject it. Then, it would immediately change to anger and disdain. Since ancient times humans have always been afraid of Magicians, so it was decided that we would hide our presence. However, there are people who do not think this way. They are in <Ghost Trailer>.”

If one were to speak of the existence of Magicians, then Takeshi would not have believed it.

However, he had decided to not interrupt her story anymore.

For now, he would let Mui tell him everything and afterwards he would think about it.

“The Magicians desire a peaceful coexistence with humans. I am the same. In order to facilitate this kind of relationship, Subaru Magic Academy, where I study, forbids the use of magic in front of the human public.

“……Magic, Academy?”

“Yeah. It’s a school for Magicians. This is their school uniform.”

Takeshi remembered the magic school in a certain fantasy movie he had seen. [5]

No matter what, it was impossible for him to just accept it as reality.

“The academy is managed by an organization called <Wizard Breath> the largest community. There are several communities, a Magician can select one of them in accordance with their own ideology and way of life. Among them <Wizard Breath> is a prime example of those who express peaceful coexistence with humans. They held negotiations with government over in this world and were allowed to set up a school.”

“This world?”

“Right. This world. Subaru Magic Academy is located in the Collapsing World

where there is another Tokyo.”

“……”

Honestly, there was a limit.

Several times he saw Mui use magic, but to declare that there was a Magic Academy and another world, it’s not like he was agreeing with a child.

“Somehow……your story is beyond absurd……”

Noticing that Takeshi was dumbfounded, Mui had a wry smile.

“Yeah. It’s probably difficult to suddenly accept everything at once. But, I wanted to share it with you because you are a Magician. I couldn’t just go and leave you behind without saying anything.”

“You must be joking. I have nothing to do with this.”

“That was before. But it’s different for you now.”

Mui stood up slowly.

“<Ghost Trailer> came after me because I was trying to bring back my brother, but now I think they will also be targeting you.”

“What do you mean?”

“They should have realized that you became a Magician as well.”

Takeshi looked up at Mui who was standing in front of him, the two of them stared at each other.

Takeshi saw himself reflected in Mui’s pupil, he couldn’t say that his face didn’t look exhausted.

With a small sigh Mui said,

“When <Ghost Trailer> captures a Magician they alter their memory to make them their comrade. Nii-san was probably the same way, after all it would be impossible for Nii-san to agree with their ideology.”

“Wa, wait a minute. Then why would those guys chase me?”

Mui stopped Takeshi and continued her story.

She told him about the present situation between her and her brother.

He couldn’t believe what she said.

She couldn’t understand what their reasons were, or why they would aim for her……

Nevertheless, Mui readily bowed her head.

“Yeah. Once you are caught they erase key memories and then replace them with others.”

It’s like gasping for breath after an impact.

Why did she grab his shoulder and cry, Takeshi wanted to give Mui a final warning, but he couldn’t do it.

"No matter how unpleasant it is for you, I want you to come with me. I have no choice but to protect you.”

“Protect me huh. [6]

“When you get captured by <Trailer> you lose yourself. I want you to follow me. You may dislike the fact that you have become a Magician, I do too. That’s why, I beg of you, please come back together with me.”

With a deep bow Mui pleaded.

“……Please.”[7]

Mui remained bowing, Takeshi could not tell her to get out.

Why had it become like this?

While he still didn’t believe everything Mui said, it was true that she was currently being chased by those guys.

Among the things Mui had told him was that those guys were also chasing him, because of his encounter with them earlier, he could safely say that this was a realistic fact.

With a look of half resignation on his face, a sigh was mingled within his words.

“So based on what you have said, what is my best course of action?”

With a look of triumph on her face, Mui slowly surveyed the room.

“Do you have a large mirror? Something like a full length mirror.”

“Mirror? There’s a big one in the bathroom.”

Takeshi had a puzzled look on his face, he wondered why Mui would ask such a thing.

“Before that, you had better change your clothes, your appearance looks conspicuous.”

Takeshi still wore his Kendo Gi.

Takeshi wanted to say he knew that without her suggestion but for now he changed his clothes.

During the time he changed, Mui waited outside in the hallway.

Takeshi changed his clothes to a T-shirt and a pair of cotton pants and walked out of his room to where Mui was.

“Well, let’s go. To the place where only Magicians can go.”

Downstairs was quiet because his mother had gone out.

Takeshi informed Mui of the location of the bathroom, she had taken their pairs of shoes from the front door and then stood in front of the mirror that was in between the washing machine and the bathtub.

Takeshi stood beside her.

Mui and Takeshi were reflected in the mirror, as usual it looked like just a pair of high school students.

If they had been in the same class, Takeshi probably would not have talked to Mui even after a year, he was usually never seen with any girls nor did he ever talk with them.

However, whether it was the large eyes with black pupils, small raised nose, the slightly reddish tint of her round cheeks, and her tiny and tight mouth, she was quite lovely and left a nice impression.

She was the type that young men secretly dream about.

Takeshi became aware of this after seeing Mui in the mirror.

Under her slightly long bangs, dignified black pupils stared straight at the mirror.

Mui's hand was on her waist, she pulled out her gun.

Takeshi stepped back involuntarily.

"……No way, that gun……"

It was unexpected, immediately following she rose up.

Mui turned the muzzle around and shot at the mirror without hesitation.

From the gun, a distinctly yellow shape erupted like a destroyed battle position, a yellow particle collided with the mirror at lightning speed.

The particle rebounded, then scattered and dyed Takeshi's view in yellow.

"It's connected."

No sooner had she said that, she stood on top of the sink and without looking at the mirror took a deep breath and jumped in.

"Eh!?"

When Mui jumped in and disappeared she caused ripples on the surface of the mirror, similar to what the surface of water would have.

Takeshi cried out in wonder and involuntarily staggered backwards.

"Wai, how can she enter? It's got to be a lie!"

He timidly stretched out his hand and touched the surface of the mirror a little bit, once again silver ripples appeared in a vortex like drops of water had hit it.

"Hyaku![8] If you don't pass through it will close on your body halfway."

Mui's voice came through from the other side.

"Bo, body halfway……"

Takeshi released a *gokuri* sound with his throat.

His heart beat was fast and audible.

—To tell him to jump……

—Still, he could not completely take in the situation, and being told to go……

Takeshi was puzzled, that being the case, all he could do was raise himself up onto the sink.

It was unexpected, Magic and an Academy……in another world……

A person's common sense would label it as absurd.

Mui's voice was calling out on the other side telling him, "Hurry."

Takeshi put his foot onto the sink, he tightly closed his eyes.

He did not what to believe anymore, he still didn't understand a single thing.

His eyes certainly saw something resembling supernatural phenomenon, that was magic, [9] the science that he always believed in had no explanation.

The exception would have been what Mui said.

However, Takeshi did not distrust Mui, concerning her brother she had on such a sad expression when she talked about him, she was not acting and the gloomy expression on her face was not a lie.

It was hard to believe in magic and another world, but her frank desire to regain her brother reached Takeshi.

Takeshi imagined that he would bump his head on the mirror and while his knee was still in the sink he would get thrown to the floor.

It would be real painful, he might crack his head.

Still, he had to go, with his jaw tightly clenched Takeshi jumped into the mirror.

☆☆☆

Part 4[edit]

Two hours ago, before Takeshi had passed through the mirror.

The Kendo Club, Judo Club, and Karate Club conducted club activities during summer holiday in the underground gymnasium's dojo of Sakuraya Senior High School.

Recently as a countermeasure to heat stroke, it had been decided that it was necessary for practice to be held in the morning.

At the end of the dojo that had been divided into three areas, the Kendo Club

was about start practice.

“Oi, what is Nanase doing?”

A haughty, second year student who had become the club president half a year ago questioned the first year who had just barely made it on time.

“I just came from the club room.”

The first year student who was also Takeshi’s friend, replied to the club president who had scowled.

“He’s late.”

The bamboo sword he held in his hand made a bishitsu sound when he slapped it into the palm of his other hand.

To correct the club member who had slacked off on his training, the president led their practice with a fiendish expression.

To somehow avoid his wrath, all the club members started to move quickly.

Meanwhile, Kurumi who stood alone by the wall was puzzled.

“That Takeshi, I wonder what you’re doing.”

Kurumi was the Kendo Club Manager, she had walked to school with Takeshi this morning so there should have been enough time for him to make it to practice.

Be that as it may, Kurumi would usually wear a jersey, but today she was wearing her uniform.

After she verified the time on the clock which was hung on the dojo wall, Kurumi calmly decided to leave behind the situation.

If Takeshi was delayed in changing his clothes, then she would have to go towards the locker room in the clubroom and tell him to hurry up.

However, when she had left the gymnasium and had walked through the school’s grove of trees, she was unexpectedly greeted by someone from behind.

“A, ano! Isoshima Kurumi-san!”

When she looked back over her shoulder, she saw a handsome male student

with a good physique wearing a Judo Gi.

“That’s right, who might you be?”

“Ah, I, I am……that is……”

The boy with a sparsely grown beard started to squirm and was red in the face.

“It’s the middle of club activities, if you’re not in a hurry, can we leave this for later?”

Kurumi’s cold attitude gave the feeling of ‘you should go away.’

“Ma, matte!”

“Kyaa!”

Kurumi flung off the hand that had grabbed her shoulder.

“Sawara naideyo!”[10]

Being glared at like that any male student would flinch twice.

“Gomenasai!”[11]

Hiding both his hands behind his back, the boy drooped his head down, Kurumi let out a sigh.

“Haa, what is it?”

“I, I, always thought before that Isoshima-san was a bea, bea, beautiful person.”

“I see.”

“Ah, I, I am Endou from Class 7. You probably don’t know me, I just joined the Judo Club.”

“So what?”

Kurumi had to look up at the male student, she only came up to where his nose extended from.

“Li, li, I like you!! Please go out with me!”

Before the boy who was red in the face and looked like he might suffocate from nervousness, Kurumi never changed her expression, on the contrary she

bluntly declared: “I am going out with Nanase Takeshi in Class 2.”

However, the male student raised his face and denied it outright.

“I know that! But I also heard that you are pretending to go out with him.”[12]) Kurumi’s mouth slightly twitched.

“Who said that?”

“Eh, well that is……”

“Takeshi and I are properly going out.”

“Is that so? But.”

Little by little resentment started to surface on Kurumi’s face, but he failed to notice it.

“Besides, even if I wasn’t going out with him, I wouldn’t go out with you.”

“Why not? I am taller than him and I think I have a better body build.”

Kurumi stomped her black loafers on the ground and scraped the surface with them.

“It looks like you don’t understand. I have no motivation to be part of ‘Beauty and the Beast’.” [13]) The male student blinked his eyes.

“Eh? That……”

After Kurumi finished saying that she turned her back on him.

Her derision was plain to see.

“I’m saying I won’t go out with just anyone. Well, I have to hurry.”

Leaving the dumbfounded Judo Club member behind, Kurumi quickly headed towards the clubroom building.

This was an everyday occurrence for her.

I like you, I love you, I want to go out with you, I’ve fallen for you and want to go steady.

She could say there wasn’t a great difference from before when guys approached her.

“Disgusting, really. All men besides Takeshi ought to go extinct.” [14]) Irritated, Kurumi moved in a half jog, when she got to where she could see the club building she happened to see the school gate beyond and tilted her head in doubt.

“Takeshi? What situation……”

Even though they were quickly leaving through the gate, she had this feeling that it was Takeshi.

Moreover, he was holding the hand of a girl.

After Kurumi quickly glanced at the Kendo Club building, she changed her direction towards the school gate.

☆☆☆

Part 5[edit]

The senior high school Takeshi and Kurumi attended was around 20 minutes walking time from the neighborhood they lived in.

Takeshi was fortunate no other girl saw him leave the school, Kurumi hurriedly chased after them but for some reason the two of them were desperately running away and she could not catch up to them.

Yet it was still morning, Kurumi felt like she was going for a midsummer run, by the time she would get to her house somebody would be waking up.

“……I, I don’t beli……eve this……”

Haa, haa, she was breathing quite heavy and needed to take rest, she put her hands on the fence surrounding her house, suddenly she felt crowded.

“In the end, Takeshi returned home, just what is he doing?”

Nevertheless, she wanted to press a question on Takeshi, somehow she stood up and stumbled her way over to the gate in the middle of the fence.

Kurumi’s house was called Isoshima Residence in the neighborhood and was a mansion.

Someone came out of the residence, she was an oba [15] named Kayo and she had been their maid for many years.

“Ara, ojou-san. What a quick return home.”

You could see that she was holding a dust pan and broom in her hand, afterwards she went around the area and started cleaning.

However, Kurumi adjusted her breathing there and just passed by.

“Gomenasai, Kayo-san. I am in a hurry.”

As she approached Takeshi’s house she straightened her back.

She did not want to let Takeshi’s family see her staggered and out of breath.

“At any rate, that girl……I wonder who she was……”

The girl who was together with Takeshi bothered her.

Kurumi had only seen her profile for a moment, but it was a girl she did not know.

“Ahh, mou”

Her thoughts were all messed up, she just couldn’t agree with it.[16]

As usual, she just needed to hear Takeshi out.

Kurumi rang the entranceway’s intercom.

A loud sound was heard twice.

Kurumi waited for a little while but there was no answer, she pressed the intercom again.

She waited, but there was still no sign of anyone coming out.

Unpleasant thoughts rose to the surface of Kurumi’s mind.

All of his family was out, but she was certain Takeshi ran here with the girl.

—It was possible that he was in a situation where he could not come out.

She rang the intercom several more times.

But, there was still no answer.

“Just what are you doing Takeshi?”

Kurumi went to the front porch without permission and knocked on the door.

Kurumi had a relationship with Takeshi’s family since primary school.

Although she hesitated a little, she grasped the doorknob and easily opened the door.

“It’s opened……”

Kurumi quietly looked inside, she checked for Takeshi’s shoes by the entrance, they weren’t there.

The girl’s shoes were also not there.

“I wonder if he did not go home.”

Even so, it would be impossible for him to leave without locking the door, she loudly shouted towards the second floor.

“Takeshi, I am coming in!”

She had the belief that even if nobody was home, they would not get upset at her for entering without permission.

She politely took of her shoes and arranged them, then she went up to the second floor.

She was familiar with Takeshi’s room, she went to it but it was empty.

“Nobody……is here?”

But, she knew someone had come.

There was a tray placed on the carpet with cups on it.

“Takeshi, where are you?”

The curtains had been closed, she quickly pulled them open.

From there she could see the garden of her house.

However, Kurumi saw something else she had not expected.

There were two men floating in the sky and looking at the window.

“Kyaa!”

The window suddenly shattered in front of Kurumi, she involuntarily screamed as the glass fell down.

She put her arms up in front of her to protect her face.

Kurumi was prepared for the broken glass to hit her, instead her arm were hit by lumps of something else and felt no pain.

Together with the summer heat, the men came in through the window.

A man with a good physique and evil looking eyes grabbed Kurumi's arm and made her stand up from her crouched position.

Kurumi slightly opened her eyes and saw that the man's muscles stood out from his big arms and thick waist.

She saw a sword hung from his leather belt.

"I'm sorry, did I injure you?" Inquired another man who came in through the window after and peered at her face.

He wore a green shirt with a creepy amoeba on it.

"Ohh, it's a bibin-san,"[17] the guy said in admiration.

Kurumi looked at the man who had grabbed her again.

From the front she timidly looked up at him.

The man did not look at Kurumi.

His gaze was presumptuously scrutinizing the room.

"Hanashite!!" [18]

Kurumi tried to shake off the man's arm and he easily let go, now he looked down at her with a terrifying expression on his face.

"Were……you guys……flo, floating……"

She saw it with her own eyes and she could not believe it.

Kurumi could brag that she was a realist since her childhood.

She didn't watch anime or fantasy movies.

She was not manipulated by the opportunistic adults.

However, she had never felt the fear she did now.

Two people who were human, floated through the window from outside.

The glass from the window that had shattered was scattered throughout the room.

She did not know what the cause was.

Kurumi took several steps away and placed some distance between her and the two people.

The men searched around the room, they opened the desk draw and examined the closet.

However, they did not find what they were looking and once more their attention returned to Kurumi.

The man lowered his waist for the sword and came closer.

“St, stop……don’t come any closer!”

Kurumi fled to the corner of the room, almost immediately her arm was caught again.

“Itai!”[19] Kurumi screamed when the grip was tightened.

“Where are those two people?”

“Two people?”

When she heard that Kurumi asked in return but was interrupted by another voice.

“Oigami, Ushiwaka, that’s enough. Let’s go.”

When she looked, another man had floated in through the window.

It was a man with black hair, he looked a little older than the other two.

Kurumi’s arm was released, the two men turned around and were about to exit through the window.

At that time, Kurumi was in low spirits, she reached for the hem of the pants of the man who had grabbed her arm and pulled on them.

“Wait just a minute!”

Anger had overcome her fear.

Kurumi slapped the man on the cheek with all her might when he looked over his shoulder.

"……This woman."

The man ferociously bared his teeth, he raised his arm.

Kurumi stared back at him defiantly.

This Isoshima Kurumi was different.

She wasn't like the old Kurumi.

She was hurt and she wasn't going to accept it meekly, she believed that she was not a weak person.

She recalled the many times before when she was unilaterally attacked and then ran home and how she thought that it was fine, she strongly disliked that kind of person.

Even if she hit him with all her strength and then was retaliated against she would have no regrets.

The mouth of the man formed into a thin smile when he raised his fist above his head.

"Heh, what a strong-willed beauty, but this is reality."

He swung down his arm.

"It's not like I hate you or anything."

He pretended to turn his back on Kurumi and immediately walk away, however the man quickly turned around and Kurumi received a strike on the nape of her neck.

"……Ah……"

Her vision blurred and she collapsed onto the floor.

Kurumi felt the short fur of the carpet brush against her cheek as she simultaneously lost consciousness.

Translator's Notes and References[edit]

1. ↑ A reusable shopping bag.
2. ↑ He uses an informal mother here, compared to Mui who use the polite form in the previous sentence.
3. ↑ The actual Japanese text is 六が意味深な目を向けると, the first half after her name 意味深な means with profound (usually hidden) meaning, while the second half 目を向けると means to shift one's focus or attention. There's no way to literally translate and have it make sense so I did the best equivalent I could think of, if anybody has a better suggestion feel free to change it.
4. ↑ Not really sure if this is correct original text is『亡霊の先導者たち』.
5. ↑ Harry Potter anyone?
6. ↑ This is Takeshi speaking in case you are confused, the previous line was Mui's. Ore is what is used by males when they say I or me.
7. ↑ She use the humble form of please here.
8. ↑ Hurry!
9. ↑ Original text was マジック.
10. ↑ Don't touch me! I know, it might be kind of stupid to do this, but I think it's about emphasis anyways so sue me, not that you would get anything.
11. ↑ I'm very sorry. You might notice that I sometimes leave stuff like the last few lines romanized, mainly because I am thinking of what it sounds like in my head. It probably sounds inconsistent from everything else which is in English.
12. ↑ Original Japanese text was付き合ってるフリ, which literally translates to free date.
13. ↑ Ouch, that's a real harsh rejection that might make any teenage boy cry.
14. ↑ Wow, she has no mercy, I mean understand why but still…
15. ↑ Grandmother
16. ↑ Jealous are we Kurumi?
17. ↑ Pretty girl
18. ↑ Let me go!! or Release me!! You pick which one you want to use in your

head.

19. ↑ It hurts!